



Beating the "Baby Blues!"

Having a baby is hard work. You may feel "up" one minute and "down" the next. You may be sad or cry sometimes for almost no reason. You may have trouble sleeping, not be hungry, or have problems concentrating and making decisions.

These feelings are not unusual and are only temporary. Many new mothers feel this way. You may hear this called "baby blues" or "postpartum depression". It is very common.

It happens because of the normal changes that your body goes through after delivery. With a new baby, you may not be getting enough sleep. If you find this happening to you, it may help to talk to other mothers or a friend. You will feel blue less often as your body adjusts. But if you stay depressed, you may have a more serious problem. Ask for help from your doctor.

You will feel better if you TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND EAT WELL. Here's how to be a Healthy Mom:

Rest

You need plenty of rest to get your energy back. Try to nap when the baby naps.

Eat Well

Good nutrition is important now, just as it was while you were pregnant. Plan meals using a variety of foods from the Food Guide Pyramid. Take time to eat, even if it is smaller amounts throughout the day.

Eating well and exercising will also help you lose the weight you gained during pregnancy. Don't skip meals. Missing a meal can lead to overeating later in the day.

Fluids Are Important

Fluids are important for good health. Every woman needs at least 8 cups of fluids daily. Good choices are milk, water, juice, and soup.

Get A Check-Up

You need to have a check-up between four and six weeks after the baby is born to make sure that your body has returned to normal. This is a good time to ask your doctor about your feelings and family planning.

Ask For Some Help

One of the best things that you can do is seek support; find someone to talk to and tell them about your feelings. Ask a relative, friend, or neighbor to help with child care, chores, and errands. Have them watch the baby while you take a nap. Don't worry about the housework, it can wait.

Keep a journal so that you can let all of your feelings out each day. Over time, look through your journal and you'll see progress, which can make you feel even better. Remember that you're not Supermom and don't have to be -- ask for help.

Pamper Yourself

Make time to do something for yourself everyday - even 20 minutes can be a well-needed break for meditation, reading, taking a bath, or staring off into space!

Try a new hairstyle or give yourself a manicure. Enjoy a favorite activity. This will help you relax.

Get Fresh Air And Sunshine

Being outside is good for you and your baby. Ask your doctor when you can begin to exercise and what type of exercise is right for you. Exercise feels good and helps reduce stress and the "baby blues." Exercise helps you get back in shape and decreases your body fat. Take a walk or plan a time to exercise every day.

